

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus comprising:

an interface which receives a job of requesting an accelerator function, from the outside;

5       a processing path decision section which determines whether a first image processing path to perform image processing in a copy operation overlaps a second image processing path to perform image processing in the execution of the accelerator function  
10      in the job received via the interface; and

an image processing section which performs image processing in a copy operation and image processing in the execution of the accelerator function at the same time, when the processing path decision section  
15      determines that the first image processing path does not overlap the second image processing path.

2. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a storage section which stores a management table  
20      to manage waiting jobs unable to execute the accelerator function; and

a search section which searches the management table for a job where the first image processing path does not overlap the second image processing path to  
25      perform image processing in the execution of the accelerator function in the waiting jobs, wherein the image processing section executes any job

searched for by the search section when the processing path decision section determines that the first image processing path overlaps the second image processing path.

5           3. The image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the management of the management table includes a parameter used in image processing requested by the accelerator function requested by the waiting jobs.

10           4. The image forming apparatus according to claim 3, further comprising:

            a selector section which selects a job when a parameter managed in the management table for the job searched for by the search section coincides with a  
15           parameter already set in image processing performed in the image processing path of the job, wherein

            the image processing section, when the job searched for is present, gives priority to the job selected by the selector section, in processing.

20           5. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the image processing section includes a color image data processing section which processes color image data and a monochrome image data processing section for processing monochrome image data, and

25           each of the first image processing path and the second image processing path is a path which passes through either the color image data processing section

or the monochrome image data processing section.

6. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the image processing section includes a plurality of image processing blocks each of which  
5 subjects image data to different processing, wherein

each of the first image processing path and the second image processing path is a path which passes through said plurality of image processing blocks in a different manner.

10 7. The image forming apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a system load decision section which determines the magnitude of a system load;

an operating clock decision section which  
15 determines an operating clock for each processing section included in the image processing section on the basis of the load determined at the load decision section; and

a clock setting section which sets a clock  
20 operation for each of the processing sections according to the determination of the operating clock decision section.

8. The image forming apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

25 a system load decision section which determines the magnitude of a system load;

an operating clock decision section which

determines operating clocks for at least one of the color image data processing section and the monochrome image data processing section, on the basis of the load determined at the load decision section; and

5           a clock setting section which sets operating clocks in the color image data processing section and the monochrome image data processing section, in accordance with the determination of the operating clock decision section.

10           9. The image forming apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising:

          a system load decision section which determines the magnitude of a system load;

          an operating clock decision section which  
15       determines an operating clock for at least each of said plurality of image processing blocks, on the basis of the load determined at the load decision section; and

          a clock setting section which sets an operating clock for each of said plurality of image processing,  
20       in accordance with the determination of the operating clock decision section.